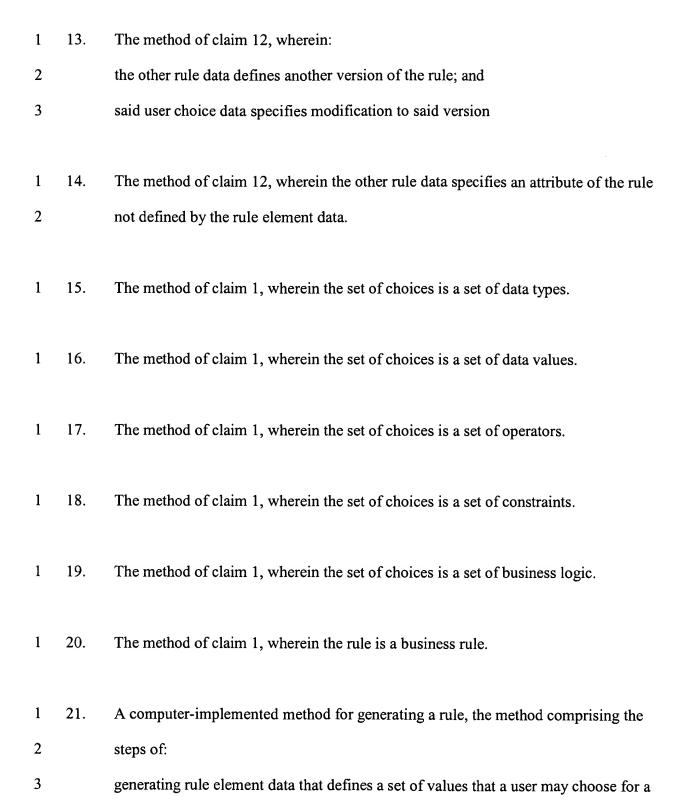CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1   1.   A computer-implemented method for generating a rule, the method comprising the

2   steps of:

3   generating rule element data that defines a set of choices that a user may choose for a

4   rule element;

5   receiving user choice data that specifies one or more choices made by the user for the

6   rule element; and

7   generating the rule based upon the user choice data.

1   2.   The method of claim 1, wherein the steps further include presenting said set of

2   choices to said user.

1   3.   The method of claim 1, wherein:

2   the method further comprises generating a user interface based on said rule element

3   data; and

4   wherein the step of receiving user choice data includes receiving user choice data

5   from a user interacting with the user interface.

1   4.   The method of claim 1, wherein:

2   the method further comprises receiving user input specifying a set of values defining

3   said set of choices; and

4   wherein the step of generating said rule element data includes generating rule element

5   data that defines said set of values as said set of choices.

1   5.   The method of claim 1, wherein said rule element is a value.

1   6.   The method of claim 1, wherein said rule element data specifies a source of data that

2   defines the set of choices

1   7.   The method of claim 1, wherein said source of data is a database system.

1   8.   The method of claim 1, wherein said rule element is a condition.

1   9.   The method of claim 1, further comprising processing the rule.

1   10.   The method of claim 1, further comprising updating a rule repository to reflect said

2   rule.

1   11.   The method of claim 1, wherein said rule element data further defines how the user

2   may select said set of choices.

1   12.   The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating the rule based upon the user

2   choice data includes generating the rule based upon the user choice data and other

3   rule data.

1   13.   The method of claim 12, wherein:

2   the other rule data defines another version of the rule; and

3   said user choice data specifies modification to said version

1   14.   The method of claim 12, wherein the other rule data specifies an attribute of the rule

2   not defined by the rule element data.

1   15.   The method of claim 1, wherein the set of choices is a set of data types.

1   16.   The method of claim 1, wherein the set of choices is a set of data values.

1   17.   The method of claim 1, wherein the set of choices is a set of operators.

1   18.   The method of claim 1, wherein the set of choices is a set of constraints.

1   19.   The method of claim 1, wherein the set of choices is a set of business logic.

1   20.   The method of claim 1, wherein the rule is a business rule.

1   21.   A computer-implemented method for generating a rule, the method comprising the

2   steps of:

3   generating rule element data that defines a set of values that a user may choose for a

4   rule element;

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5   receiving user choice data that specifies one or more values chosen by the user for the

6   rule element; and

7   generating the rule based upon the user choice data.

1   22.   A computer-implemented method for generating a rule that may be executed by a

2   rules engine, the method comprising the steps of:

3   generating a template that defines:

4   a rule structure with one or more rule elements and an editable rule element;

5   a editable rule element type, and

6   a set of choices that a user may choose for the editable rule element;

7   receiving user choice data that specifies one or more choices chosen by the user for

8   the rule element;

9   generating the rule based upon the user choice data; and

10   updating a rules repository to reflect the rule.

1   23.   The method of claim 22, further comprising:

2   generating a user interface based on said template; and

3   presenting said set of choices to said user using said user interface.

1   24.   A computer-readable medium carrying one or more sequences of instructions for

2   generating a rule, wherein execution of the one or more sequences of instructions by

3   one or more processors causes the one or more processors to perform the steps of:

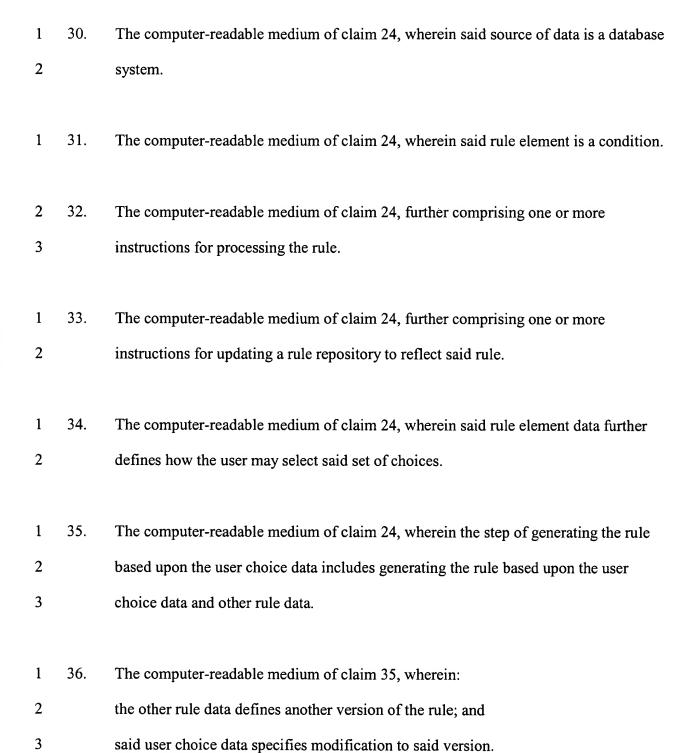4   generating rule element data that defines a set of choices that a user may choose for a

5   rule element;

6   receiving user choice data that specifies one or more choices made by the user for the

7   rule element; and

8   generating the rule based upon the user choice data.

1   25.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein the steps further include

2   presenting said set of choices to said user.

1   26.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein:

2   the computer-readable medium further comprises generating a user interface based on

3   said rule element data; and

4   wherein the step of receiving user choice data includes receiving user choice data

5   from a user interacting with the user interface.

1   27.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein:

2   the computer-readable medium further comprises one or more instructions for

3   receiving user input specifying a set of values defining said set of choices; and

4   wherein the step of generating said rule element data includes generating rule element

5   data that defines said set of values as said set of choices.

1   28.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein said rule element is a value.

1   29.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein said rule element data specifies

2   a source of data that defines the set of choices.

1   30.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein said source of data is a database

2   system.

1   31.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein said rule element is a condition.

2   32.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, further comprising one or more

3   instructions for processing the rule.

1   33.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, further comprising one or more

2   instructions for updating a rule repository to reflect said rule.

1   34.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein said rule element data further

2   defines how the user may select said set of choices.

1   35.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein the step of generating the rule

2   based upon the user choice data includes generating the rule based upon the user

3   choice data and other rule data.

1   36.   The computer-readable medium of claim 35, wherein:

2   the other rule data defines another version of the rule; and

3   said user choice data specifies modification to said version.

1   37.   The computer-readable medium of claim 35, wherein the other rule data specifies an

2   attribute of the rule not defined by the rule element data.

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1   38.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein the set of choices is a set of data

2   types.

1   39.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein the set of choices is a set of data

2   values.

1   40.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein the set of choices is a set of

2   operators.

1   41.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein the set of choices is a set of

2   constraints.

1   42.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein the set of choices is a set of

2   business logic.

1   43.   The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein the rule is a business rule.

2

1   44.   A computer-readable medium carrying one or more sequences of instructions for

2   generating a rule, wherein execution of the one or more sequences of instructions by

3   one or more processors causes the one or more processors to perform the steps of:

4   generating rule element data that defines a set of values that a user may choose for a

5   rule element;

6   receiving user choice data that specifies one or more values chosen by the user for the

7   rule element; and

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8 generating the rule based upon the user choice data.

1 45. A computer-readable medium carrying one or more sequences of instructions for

2 generating a rule, wherein execution of the one or more sequences of instructions by

3 one or more processors causes the one or more processors to perform the steps of:

4 generating a template that defines:

5   a rule structure with one or more rule elements and an editable rule element;

6   a editable rule element type, and

7   a set of choices that a user may choose for the editable rule element;

8 receiving user choice data that specifies one or more choices chosen by the user for

9   the rule element;

10 generating the rule based upon the user choice data; and

11 updating a rules repository to reflect the rule.

1 46. The computer-readable medium of claim 45, further comprising one or more

2 instructions for:

3 generating a user interface based on said template; and

4 presenting said set of choices to said user using said user interface.